

Iowa Legal Aid

Board Position Profile

The Iowa Legal Aid Board of Directors is composed of 18 members. At least 60% of the membership (11) must be attorneys, one-third of the membership (6) must be client eligible at the time the member is appointed to the Board and one member of the Board may be neither an attorney nor client eligible individual.

The Board meets in-person four times a year. These quarterly meetings are conducted on Saturday mornings in Des Moines, Iowa. Client members of the Board, and any other members of the Board who wish to participate, also meet the evening before the Saturday Board meetings. Lunch is provided the day of the Board meeting and members may be reimbursed for travel costs to attend the meeting. The board has several committees which usually meet by conference call or on the day of the Board meeting.

Scope:

A Board member should be a person who is a recognized leader in the community or organization, and strongly supportive of the mission of Iowa Legal Aid.

Experience, Skills & Qualifications:

- Supportive of the Mission of Iowa Legal Aid.
- Recognized leader in a community or organization.
- Able to lead and/or to influence organizations and communities supportive of Iowa Legal Aid.
- Able to express and to advocate the needs and vision of Iowa Legal Aid and the goal of "equal access to justice."
- Contributes to the diversity of the Board so that Board membership will reasonably reflect the diversity of the population of the areas served by Iowa Legal Aid and of the legal community, including race, gender, ethnicity, and other similar factors. Membership should also reflect representation from different geographical areas of the state and, for attorneys, varying types of practice.
- Experience and familiarity with potential sources of funding related to the legal service needs of Iowa Legal Aid.
- Member of Iowa Bar in good standing (attorneys only).

Training:

Training will be held for new Board members the evening before the first scheduled meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Board. Prior members of the Board will be involved in this training to the extent appropriate and possible, The training will substantively include:

- Regulatory issues;
- Structure of Iowa Legal Aid;
- Introduction to staff and services;
- Board responsibilities;

- Interaction of diverse members of Board; and
- Role play involving a Board member talking with a legislator or another individual outside of Iowa Legal Aid about Iowa Legal Aid's services.

Key Duties & Responsibilities:

- Development of policy for and adoption of budget annually for Iowa Legal Aid.
- Participate in the activities and deliberations of the Iowa Legal Aid Board of Directors.
- Participate in the fundraising activities of Iowa Legal Aid.
- Act as liaison between Iowa Legal Aid and other stakeholders in the delivery of legal services to low-income persons.

Expectations:

- Participate in the initial Board orientation and any on-going training provided for Board members.
- Know the organization's mission, goals, policies, programs, services, strengths and needs.
- Attend Board meetings whenever possible, read and respond when appropriate to written communications, and be available for consultation with fellow Board members and staff.
- Be an active participant in at least one committee. This includes attending meetings and completing tasks as assigned.
- Undertake a fair share of the responsibility for tasks required by the Board.
- Advocate for the needs of Iowa Legal Aid clients, client communities and organizations.
- Participate in development efforts by:
 - ☐ Providing a personal financial contribution commensurate with the member's ability.
 - ☐ Identifying potential donors and/or soliciting personal gifts from donors.
 - ☐ Participating in at least one fundraising event.
 - ☐ Researching and identifying potential funding sources for Iowa Legal Aid.

Confidentiality:

- Members should be discreet with information discussed at Board meetings and should consider all information confidential unless it is disseminated by the organization to the general public.

Relationship with Staff:

- Counsel the executive director, as appropriate, by offering support in areas of policy and programing as well as the director's relationships with groups or individuals.
- When questions or disagreements arise, communicate directly and in a timely way with the executive director.

Avoid Conflicts:

- Serve the organization as a whole.
- Avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest that might embarrass the Board or Iowa Legal Aid and disclose any possible conflicts to the Board in a timely fashion.
- Maintain independence and objectivity and do what a sense of fairness, ethics and personal integrity dictate even though not necessarily obliged to do so by law, regulation or custom.
- Do not accept or offer favors or gifts from or to anyone who does business with or receives grants from the organization.

Adopted by Iowa Legal Aid Board of Directors
April 30, 2005